DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 438 623 EA 030 263

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TITLE	Curricular and Instructional Differentiation in Magnet Schools: Market Driven or Institutionally Entrenched?
SPONS AGENCY	Spencer Foundation, Chicago, IL.
PUB DATE	1999-10-00
NOTE	33p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the University Council of Educational Administration (Minneapolis, Minnesota, October 28-31, 1999).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Comparative Analysis; *Curriculum Design; Elementary Secondary Education; Free Enterprise System; Instructional Innovation; *Magnet Schools; *Marketing; *School Choice
IDENTIFIERS	Institutionalization (of Innovations)

ABSTRACT

This paper examines market and institutional perspectives to provide a framework for exploring curricular and instructional differentiation in school choice. It reviews previous research on the relationship between school choice and curricular, and instructional differentiation and innovation, and explores the extent to which principals and teachers in two urban districts reported that curricular and instructional differentiation and innovation exist between magnet and nonmagnet schools. The article focuses on magnet schools as one type of choice strategy. It explains how most school-choice plans are heavily rooted in market theory--a set of theoretical arguments based on a series of fundamental economic assumptions about human and organizational behavior--and how a "quasi-market" theory would put more emphasis on creating a wide range of choices, rather than fostering competition between providers. Findings from the study suggest three important issues: (1) students who choose magnet schools because they are expecting different methods of instruction are not receiving such instruction; (2) the extent to which teachers describe their principal as interested in innovative ideas is unrelated to curricular and instructional innovation; and (3) magnet schools are more likely to lead to school-level--rather than classroom-level--curricular and instructional changes. (Contains 27 references, an appendix, and 3 tables.) (RJM)

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ED 438 623

Curricular and Instructional Differentiation in Magnet Schools: Market Driven or Institutionally Entrenched?

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Annual Convention
Minneapolis, Minnesota
October 29-31, 1999

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Curricular and Instructional Differentiation in Magnet Schools: Market Driven or Institutionally Entrenched?

Introduction

Recent surveys have revealed that the majority of the public supports some form of school choice and that such programs within the public schools raise minimal controversy (Rose and Gallup, 1999). Specifically, in the 27th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll, 69% of respondents favored allowing families to choose which public schools their children attend, regardless of residence (Elam and Rose, 1996). Magnet programs are the most prevalent strategy to provide such choice. These programs are being implemented in an increasing number of school systems to improve academic standards, promote diversity in race and income, and provide a broad range of offerings to satisfy individual talents and interests. During the 1991-92 academic year, districts operated 2,400 magnet schools and 3,200 individual magnet programs, which collectively served 1.2 million students. A national study of these programs indicated that 37% offered a specific subject matter focus, 27% utilized a unique instructional approach, 11% emphasized the arts, and 12% provided career-vocational education (Steel and Levine, 1994).

What is behind the names of these specialized themes and approaches, and what is the nature of teaching and learning in such schools? The purpose of this paper is threefold. First, the paper presents the market and institutional perspectives that provide a framework for exploring curricular and instructional differentiation in a system of school choice. Second, the paper reviews previous

research on the relationship between various forms of school choice and curricular and instructional differentiation and innovation. Finally, the paper presents the results of research that examines the extent to which principals and teachers in two urban districts report that curricular and instructional differentiation and innovation exists between magnet and nonmagnet schools.

Market and Institutional Perspectives of School Choice

Most school choice plans are heavily rooted in market theory--a set of theoretical arguments based on a series of fundamental economic assumptions about human and organizational behavior in the context of a marketplace. Market theory suggests that educational systems would offer and supply a much wider array of educational options to parents. School personnel would be motivated to maximize their own gains, for example higher student enrollment, that would offer them prestige, power, and influence in the system. Furthermore, to gain "market share", educators would not only seek to respond to demand but would be compelled to create innovative choices for parents. Since there is no longer a guaranteed clientele, educators would respond to competitive pressures through innovation and change.

An alternative conception of a system of choice in the educational arena is that of a "quasi-market" as opposed to a market (Woods, 1994). LeGrand and Bartlett (1993) outline some of the key differences between markets and quasi-markets. On the supply side, unlike traditional markets, suppliers, namely schools, are not

motivated by profit maximization. What such organizations will maximize or be expected to maximize is uncertain. On the demand side, consumer purchasing power is not exercised in terms of money, rather it is manifested in terms of an earmarked budget. Thus, there are many intermediaries between the parent-consumer and the school-supplier (LeGrand and Bartlett, 1993). A quasi-market system "puts the emphasis more on creating a wide range of choices than on fostering competition between providers" (Glatter, Woods, and Bagley, 1997, p. 7).

The institutional perspective would not support such widespread differentiation in a system of school choice. Institutional theory suggests that organizations are shaped by "the rules and belief systems as well as the relational networks that arise in the broader societal context of organizations" (Scott, 1998). Institutional theory is an adaptive perspective of organizations; organizations change themselves to be congruent with their environments. Although a system of school choice may offer differentiation among schools, the powerful institutional norms and cultures of school districts would not support widespread innovation and differences among magnet and nonmagnet schools. On the contrary, institutional theory would predict that there are strong beliefs about what constitutes a 'real school', a school that matches the prevailing cultural beliefs about what schools should be (Metz, 1990). Schools that are different from 'real schools' may not appeal to parents, thus creating a system of homogenization rather than differentiation.

School Choice and Curricular and Instructional Differentiation and Innovation: Theory and Evidence

Theoretically, a market system of education would produce greater diversity and innovation among schools because educators would be encouraged to maximize their own gains by responding to the diverse demands of parents (Raywid, 1989). These demands are expressed by parents who have the right to choose and exit schools and an enhanced voice to exert influence. This motivation from market forces would revitalize a lax and entrenched education system. Glenn (1990) expressed this sentiment stating, "Sometimes I compare school reform to Frankenstein's monster stretched on the table, all the parts neatly sewn together but no life to make it get up and walk until the lightning is hitched up; parent choice can be that jolt of lightning" (p. 330). In addition, a less restricted system of choice is purported to be more efficient at matching family preferences than a centralized bureaucratic system with a common set of educational goals and programs.

According to Metz (1986), school choice can serve as a "lever to introduce innovation" (p. 1). Similarly, Finn (1990) argues that under a system of choice:

> ...insofar as educators gain professional autonomy and make more decisions at the building level–to that degree will schools come to differ from one another. The differences may take many forms, but they are sure to include variations in curricular emphases, in school "specialties," in pedagogical style, ... (p. 9)

Following their extensive analysis of High School and Beyond Data, Chubb and Moe (1990) concur with this imperative of autonomy for innovation: "Effective schools

are also much freer to design their own curricula and to choose their own methods of instruction... If curricula and instructional methods are prescribed too rigidly or extensively, teachers and students, who are diverse in their strengths and weaknesses, may have trouble performing successfully" (p. 153). Since schools of choice are presumed to have greater autonomy, more innovation could also be assumed.

While Chubb and Moe portray bureaucracy as an impediment to innovation and diversity, Fliegel (1990) draws a contradictory conclusion after reflecting on his experience in East Harlem.

> ...a large bureaucracy can be helpful because of its size: no one is willing to take responsibility for much that happens. A vacuum is created that allows an innovator room to begin to implement change. Once something is started, if it makes some sense, it is very difficult for centralized administrators to stop it, especially if it crosses lines of bureaucratic responsibility. ...the success of District No. 4 owes something to the 'creative non-compliance' of teachers and administrators... (p. 215)

From this viewpoint, innovation is more contingent upon the initiative of teachers and school level administrators.

Unlike market theory, institutional theory predicts that choice may inhibit diversity and innovation. Clinchy (1989) notes:

> Indeed, in all too many instances the policy of diversity and

> controlled choice has been installed as a citywide desegregation measure only to languish as the entrenched bureaucracy dreams up all sorts of ingenious reasons why it should not and will not work, why surveys of parents and teachers should not be conducted, why decision-making authority should not be transferred downward from the central bureaucracy to the individual school. (p. 293)

From an institutional theory perspective, then, one would expect to see the status quo and more standardization than innovation in schools of choice. If Clinchy's charge is accurate, institutional forces for stability may be more powerful than market forces towards innovation in schools of choice.

Presently, market theory advocates lack compelling evidence to back up their contention that school choice leads to differentiated and innovative teaching and learning. In the most extensive study to date comparing curriculum and instruction in schools of choice to traditional schools, Sosniak and Ethington (1992) utilized data from the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) 1988. After finding no significant differences in curricular content, school organization, time spent on particular instructional strategies, and amount of homework assigned, they conclude, "that the choice that parents and students have available to them when they opt for public schools of choice may not be academic" (p. 48). These researchers add:

> We cannot and would not argue that a school is a school is a school... our data support only the argument that *the extent to*

> *which schools are educationally different and the nature of the differences among schools are the same in typical nonchoice schools as in our sample of public schools of choice.* (p. 48)

Three additional projects support the findings of Sosniak and Ethington (1992). Archbald (1988) identified no significant differences in the amount of curricular and instructional variation in his evaluation of magnet and nonmagnet schools in the Milwaukee Public School System (MPS). In her study of three distinct magnet schools, Metz (1986) also found minimal instructional variation. Metz attributed this lack of distinctiveness to simultaneous district policies limiting opportunity for innovation. For example, in response to magnets being criticized for having a disproportionate share of resources among other advantages, the central office mandated the use of one set of texts in math and reading, additional competency testing, and greater specificity on standardized test reporting. Finally, from a comparison of public schools of choice to other public schools, Driscoll (1992) concluded:

> Selectivity by itself or even its appearance through a formal admissions procedure was no guarantee that the school used different methods, enjoyed a richer curriculum, or could promise improved performance for all students, since resources, programmatic offerings and reported instructional practices did not differ significantly between these two groups. (p. 22)

Contrary to these findings, in their study of four public schools of choice in

Israel, Shapira and Haymann (1991) deduced that these schools are characterized by unique curricular and instructional practices relative to the traditional, centralized schools in the area. They further concluded that parent satisfaction within these schools was most influenced by the extent to which parents' expectations for a unique educational program were congruent with the program the school offers.

There is also some evidence that choice can stimulate innovation and diversity in individual schools and districts. "Montclair, Cambridge, and East Harlem have not solved all their problems; they have, however proven that choice in a single district can stimulate creative planning..." (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1992, p. 46). However, even in these sites, the relationship between choice and innovation remains unclear. Does choice result in innovation, or is choice the innovation? Do they have a symbiotic relationship? Is the innovation institutionalized?

The evidence regarding the extent to which charter schools stimulate curricular and instructional innovation is mixed. Following a national study of charter schools, Manno, Finn, Bierlein, and Vanourek (1998) describe specific examples of how charter schools have implemented innovative whole school designs and specific design elements in such areas as curriculum, instruction, and assessment. On the contrary, based on her study of charter schools in California, Wells (1998) concludes, "Yet in terms of instructional practices–classroom organization, curriculum, pedagogy, and so on_we found that the majority of charter school teachers employ techniques that they used before coming to these

schools. Thus, while charter school teachers enjoy new relationships with colleagues and students, the instructional core remains similar to that in regular public school settings. Of course, there are notable exceptions to this rule among a handful of small, start-up charter schools that have maintained an overarching instructional focus" (p. 309).

Collectively, these findings point to the complexity of the relationship between school choice and curricular and instructional differentiation and innovation. The relationship is likely mediated by the type of choice arrangement, school site and teacher autonomy, and principal leadership.

Purpose

This study focuses on magnet schools as one type of choice strategy. Magnet schools are characterized by four qualities: (1) a thematic curriculum (e.g., international studies) or unique method of instruction (e.g., Paideia); (2) admissions criteria to facilitate voluntary desegregation; (3) choice of school by families; and (4) access to pupils beyond neighborhood attendance zones (Blank, 1990). All students must formally apply and be admitted to these schools. On the contrary, students are assigned to nonmagnet (i.e, neighborhood) schools based solely on the location of their residence.

This study examines curricular and instructional differentiation in two urban school districts that utilize magnet schools as a key component of student assignment. The purpose of this research is to compare indicators of curricular and

instructional differentiation and innovation in magnet and nonmagnet schools and to assess variables that may account for differences that may exist. Specifically, the study addresses the following questions.

(1) With what frequency do magnet school principals report that magnet implementation includes distinctive curriculum and instruction?

(2) Are there differences in the level at which magnet and nonmagnet teachers describe their principals as interested in and encouraging of innovation between magnet and nonmagnet (i.e., neighborhood) schools?

(3) Are there differences between magnet and nonmagnet teachers' reports of autonomy?

(4) Do variations exist among magnet and nonmagnet teachers' reports of innovative or nonstandard curriculum and instruction, and what variables account for any differences found?

The study relies on self-reported survey data from teachers and principals in these two types of schools in these districts.

Methodology

District Context and Sample

The data used in this study are from two large urban school systems in which magnet schools are an integral part of the district's student assignment plan. The total enrollment in the first district is 51,000 students, of whom 46% are served in

magnets. Acceptance is based on a first-come, first served-basis, as long as racial/ethnic balance is improved. The second district serves 36,091 students, and 28% are enrolled in magnets. Students gain admissions to magnets via a lottery. In both districts, transportation is provided to all students.

All elementary dedicated magnet schools that had been in existence for two or more years are included in this study. Each of the magnets in this sample had to be formally chosen by parents prior to their children being enrolled in the school. The nonmagnet schools were chosen by pair-matching them on racial balance with the magnets previously included.

Data Collection

An anonymous questionnaire was distributed to all certified teachers and the principal in each school. Schools with response rates below 50% were targeted for follow-up that entailed a second round of visits and phone calls. The final sample included 439 magnet school teachers, a 66.7% response rate. Of the 753 nonmagnet teachers who received questionnaires, 543 completed them, which produced a 72.1% response rate. Thirty-eight of 44 principals returned surveys for an 86% response rate.

Variables and Procedures

To examine differences in curriculum and instruction in magnet and nonmagnet schools, descriptive and multivariate statistics were employed. The

following dependent variables[1] were created to test the claims made by choice advocates relying on market rationales.

(1) Principal reports of the frequency with which magnet implementation includes: distinctive teaching style(s), and special courses, content, and materials; (12 single items).

(2) Teacher ratings of the extent to which "the principal is interested in innovative ideas"; (single item).

(3) Teacher assessments of their level of professional autonomy; (5 items, α=.6877); e.g. "I know what is expected of me but I also have freedom to be creative."

(4) Teacher reports of the level of standardization of their curriculum ; (5 items, α=.7121); e.g., "my curriculum relies heavily on textbooks, workbooks, and other published materials."

(4) Teacher summaries of the frequency with which they use various instructional strategies; (six single items); e.g., individualized assignments, projects, or tutoring.

In the multivariate analysis of curricular differentiation, school type (i.e., magnet or nonmagnet), school size, percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, level of bureaucracy, teacher autonomy, and principal leadership will be used as predictor variables.

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[1] A complete list of the items in all scales is included as Appendix A.

Results

Market advocates posit that school choice enhances curricular and instructional innovation and diversity because educators have incentives to maximize their own gains by responding to the diverse needs of parents. These needs are articulated by parents through choice of school and voice. Moreover, a less restricted system of choice is posited to be more capable of matching family preferences than a centralized bureaucratic system with a standard set of educational programs. The following sections report empirical evidence to test these claims.

Elements of Magnet School Implementation

As an indicator of curricular and instructional differentiation at the school level, magnet principals were asked to identify whether or not certain components were part of their magnet program implementation. Since nonmagnet school principals were not asked to identify which of these programmatic characteristics apply to their schools, no direct comparisons can be made. The results are summarized in Table One. It is important to emphasize that the administrators were not asked to indicate the frequency with which the innovations occurred, simply whether they existed or not. Teachers with expertise in the theme (83.3%) and distinctive teaching style(s) used (81.8%) were the most frequently implemented characteristics of the magnet programs. This is not surprising since specialized instructional approaches (e.g., Paideia, Montessori) were the core themes of several of the magnet schools. Teacher expertise is required to utilize these strategies. Other

magnet schools possessed such specialized themes as performing arts and foreign language immersion. Teaching special skills in such schools also requires teacher expertise. Despite these specializations, only 54.5% reported distinctive amounts of homework, and 27.3% noted the existence of special tests and grading policies. Therefore, alternative forms of assessment do not appear to accompany specialized instructional strategies.

Results on curricular differentiation as described by the principals were mixed. While 75% of the principals reported that special courses were offered as part of the magnet program, only 54.5% indicated that special content (i.e., content not typically covered in traditional schools) is covered within existing classes. Sixty-three percent stated that special textbooks or materials are used.

Findings on the extent to which magnet programs result in an altered physical instructional climate also varied. Sixty-seven percent of the principal respondents replied that magnet program implementation entailed special resource room(s) or laboratories. However, merely 27.3% reported a distinctive physical structure of classrooms. It appears that additional resources awarded to magnets are more likely utilized for add-on structures (e.g., labs) as opposed to the alteration of regular classrooms. Extra resources are also allocated for additional personnel. Over 58% of the magnet school administrators noted that their schools had reduced class sizes. Finally, many of the magnet school principals identified partnerships as a part of their magnet program implementation. Specifically, 66.7% of the principals claimed their schools had partnerships with a local museum or other cultural

organization, and 50% stated that community members are temporarily hired or volunteer to provide specialized, short-term instruction.

These analyses suffer from two limitations. First, since nonmagnet principals were not asked to identify which of these program characteristics exist in their schools, no comparisons can be made between magnet and nonmagnet principals. Second, since the principals in this study cannot be linked to their specific schools, determining the extent to which various magnet themes are correlated with the program characteristics cited is impossible. In other words, do certain magnet themes result in the implementation of a greater number of the twelve program variables cited in Table One? Future research to address these voids should be conducted.

Despite these limitations, the reports from the magnet principals in this study provide useful information. From the perspective of the principals, it appears that curricular and instructional innovation in these settings are much more likely to occur at the school than classroom level. For example, 75% of the principals indicated that special courses were offered, but only 54.5% stated special content is covered in existing classes. Similarly, only 54.5% noted distinctive amounts of homework, and only 27.3% described special test and grading policies as part of their programs. On average, fewer principals indicated that the classroom characteristics were part of their magnet programs. This finding may be the result of principals being more familiar with what is occurring at the school than classroom level.

Insert Table One Here

Indicators of Curricular and Instructional Differentiation and Innovation in Magnet and Nonmagnet Schools

The reports from the principals in this study primarily provide evidence on a school level view of innovation in magnet schools. To attain additional information on the extent to which the school level characteristics cited translate into classroom practices, teachers were asked to report on several measures of classroom innovation and differentiation.

Table Two summarizes the results from t-tests on teachers' ratings of indicators of innovation and diversity within magnet and nonmagnet schools. Overall, nonmagnet teachers expressed greater agreement than their magnet colleagues that their principals were interested in innovative ideas (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree). This is counter-intuitive to market theories of education. One possible explanation is that market forces ratchet up all schools in the district. In other words, nonmagnet school principals feel pressure to be innovative just to keep up with magnets, or they face losing students to them. A second explanation is that nonmagnet principals may need to be more innovative because they serve students of a lower socioeconomic status and more disadvantages, and must do so with fewer resources than their magnet peers.

Finally, magnet school principals may not need to be as innovative because they are supported by teachers who work in their schools as a result of expertise in the school's theme.

Consistent with the work of Chubb and Moe (1990), the magnet teachers in this sample reported greater levels of professional autonomy than their nonmagnet colleagues (1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree) (see Table Two). In other words, they were more likely to indicate that they have freedom to be creative in their classrooms and discretion over what content to teach. In addition, magnet school teachers described their curriculum as less standardized (1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree) (See Table Two). Collectively, these results suggest that teacher autonomy may be a stronger predictor of curricular innovation and diversity than principal interest in innovation. This finding is inconsistent with earlier research that identified the principal as a key factor in the institutionalization of innovation (Gersten, Carnine, and Green, 1982).

Teacher reports of the frequency with which they utilize various instructional strategies revealed minimal differences between magnet and nonmagnet schools. In terms of specific teaching strategies, only one difference was found. Nonmagnet teachers described a more frequent reliance on written seatwork. No significant differences were found in the frequency of use of whole class lecture, peer tutoring, individualized assignments, or grouping strategies. These results are consistent with earlier research that has reported limited instructional differentiation in schools of choice (Archbald, 1988; Driscoll, 1992; Metz, 1986; Sosniak and Ethington,

1992). Thus, as Sosniak and Ethington (1992) concluded, either nonmagnet schools are more innovative than they are given credit for, or magnet schools do not spur as much innovation in instructional practices at the classroom level as predicted.

It is important to emphasize that magnet teachers reported a less standardized curriculum and higher levels of autonomy. Despite this, only minimal differences in instructional strategies were reported. This is surprising in light of earlier research in choice contexts reporting that autonomy spurs innovation (Chubb and Moe, 1990) and district and state mandates (e.g., required texts, standardized tests) constrain it (Metz, 1986; McNeil, 1987). Clearly, more research is needed to determine why such limited instructional differentiation and innovation occurred and what additional factors need to be in place or removed for it to occur.

In spite of the lack of instructional differentiation reported by magnet school teachers, they did report a less standardized curriculum. Therefore, it is important to ascertain which variables are accounting for this reduced standardization. To that end, a multivariate regression was run on standardized curriculum that included the following predictors: school size, school SES as indicated by percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch, school type (i.e., magnet or nonmagnet), teacher autonomy, principal interest in innovation, and school bureaucracy. The results are presented in Table Three. The model is significant (F=21.66, sign. (F)=.000) with the predictors accounting for 14.7% of the variance in teacher's reports of the extent to which their curriculum is standardized. The most powerful predictors were teacher reports of school level bureaucracy, which showed a positive

relationship, and autonomy which was negatively correlated. In other words, those teachers who described the school as having excessive paperwork and red tape also described their curriculum as standardized (β=.198). On the contrary, those teachers who believed they have higher level of professional autonomy reported less curricular standardization (β=-.207). Somewhat surprisingly, teacher reports of the extent to which their principal was interested in innovative ideas was not significantly related to curricular standardization.

All three school background variables included in the study were significant. Specifically, as may have been predicted, teachers in nonmagnet schools (β=.098) and schools with a higher percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch (β=.102) indicated more standardized curriculum. However, smaller schools (β=-.076) were also described by teachers as having more standardized curricula. This was surprising since smaller schools tend to exhibit higher levels of community (e.g., collaboration) which one could argue diminishes the need for standardization.

Insert Table Three Here

Conclusions

The findings from this study raise three important issues. First, although

magnet school teachers reported higher levels of autonomy and less standardized curricula, these differences only translated into minimal differences in instructional practices. Therefore, it does not appear that students with different learning styles who choose such schools expecting different methods of instruction are actually receiving it. They may be receiving a different curriculum however.

Second, the extent to which teachers describe their principal as interested in innovative ideas is unrelated to curricular and instructional differentiation and innovation in this choice context. This is inconsistent with earlier research summarized by Louis (1990):

> research on school innovation shows that origin is not important–district and state initiated programs are not more likely to fail more than those based on school initiatives. The key factor is whether there is *also* ownership at school, and particularly ownership by the principal. (p. 383)

In those districts touted as choice success stories, innovation most often appears to arise from the site level. Given their pivotal role in choice contexts, do principals drive instructional innovation? In a comparison of principal leadership between magnet and comprehensive high schools, Blank (1986) found that these two samples received similar ratings on "instructional innovation." Blank's finding and the findings of this study do not bode well for greater institutionalized innovation in magnet schools.

Finally, based on principal's descriptions of their magnet program

implementation, it appears that magnet schools are more likely to lead to school level than classroom level curricular and instructional changes. While these reports may be influenced by greater school level than classroom level awareness, teacher reports of minimal instructional differentiation are consistent with this view. Future studies should assess the extent to which various magnet themes hinder or facilitate classroom changes.

When considering the ability of school choice to lead to outcomes such as greater curricular and instructional differentiation and innovation, it is critical to emphasize that there are many different choice arrangements, and magnets are among the most restricted. In other words, magnet schools are a controlled choice arrangement and may inhibit the unleashing of market forces as a result of such policies as racial/ethnic quotas and sibling priorities. Consequently, some of the outcomes assessed in this study may not be observed in magnet schools but could be found in other less restrictive settings. Therefore, it is imperative to replicate such studies in other choice contexts.

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Appendix A
Variables

(1) Reports of the frequency with which magnet implementation includes distinctive features; (12 single items); Principal Survey:

Special courses are offered
Special content is covered within existing classes
Special textbooks or materials are used
Distinctive physical structure of classroom
Distinctive teaching style(s) used
Distinctive amount of homework is assigned
Special test and grading policies
Special resource room(s) or laboratory
Teachers with expertise in our theme
Reduced class sizes
Partnership with a local museum or other cultural institution or organization
Individuals from the community are temporarily hired or volunteer to provide short-term instruction in special topics

(2) The principal is interested in innovative ideas; (single item); Teacher Survey.

(3) Teacher Autonomy (5 items, α=.6877); Teacher Survey
* I can take little action at this school until a superior approves it
I know what is expected of me but I also have the freedom to be creative
* The rules and regulations at this school are rigid and inflexible
I am allowed to teach in my own style
I have a lot of discretion over what content I will cover in the classes I teach

(4) Curricular standardization; (5 items, α=.7121); Teacher Survey:
My curriculum relies heavily on textbooks, workbooks, and other published materials
My curriculum uses primarily short-answer tests to assess students' learning
My curriculum FOCUSES on state curriculum requirements
A primary objective of our curriculum is to prepare students for standardized tests
My curriculum was not designed to meet the needs of individual students

(5) The frequency of teachers' use of particular instructional strategies; (6 single items); Teacher Survey:

Whole class lecture and discussion
Grouping students by their ability or performance (homogeneously)
Grouping students without regard to their ability or prior performance
Peer-tutoring
Written seatwork for the entire class
Individualized assignments, projects, or tutoring

(6) Bureaucracy
Paperwork and red tape are a major burden here; (single item); Teacher Survey.

TABLE 1

PRINCIPAL REPORTS OF MAGNET PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Variable	Yes N (%)	No N (%)
Teachers with Expertise in the Theme	10 (83.3)	2 (16.7)
Distinctive Teaching Style(s) Used	9 (81.8)	2 (19.2)
Distinctive Amount of Homework	6 (54.5)	5 (45.5)
Special Test and Grading Policies	3 (27.3)	7 (72.7)
Special Courses Offered	9 (75.0)	3 (25.0)
Special Content Covered in Existing Classes	6 (54.5)	5 (45.5)
Special Textbooks or Materials	7 (63.6)	3 (36.4)
Special Resource Room(s) or Laboratory	8 (66.7)	4 (33.3)
Distinctive Physical Structure of Classrooms	3 (27.3)	8 (72.7)
Reduced Class Sizes	7 (58.3)	5 (41.7)
Partnership with Museum or Other Cultural Organization	8 (66.7)	4 (33.3)
Community Members Provide Short-term Specialized Instruction	6 (50.0)	6 (50.0)

Table 2
Indicators of Curricular and Instructional Differentiation and Innovation

School Type	N	Mean	S_d	S_e	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Item: My principal is interested in innovative ideas						
Magnet	419	3.10	.713	.035	-2.84	.005
Nonmagnet	508	3.24	.735	.033		
(1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree)						
Item: Teacher Autonomy						
Magnet	391	3.23	.440	.022	4.43	.000
Nonmagnet	449	2.99	.484	.023		
(1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree)						
Item: Curricular Standardization						
Magnet	389	2.43	.585	.030	-6.80	.000
Nonmagnet	478	2.70	.567	.026		
(1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree)						
Item: % of Day Devoted to Whole Class Lecture and Discussion						
Magnet	408	2.48	.850	.042	-1.66	.096
Nonmagnet	497	2.57	.870	.039		
(1=0-5%, 2=6-25%, 3=26-75%, 4=76-100%)						
Item: % of Day with Students Grouped by Ability						
Magnet	394	2.07	.945	.048	-.37	.714
Nonmagnet	492	2.10	.996	.045		
(1=0-5%, 2=6-25%, 3=26-75%, 4=76-100%)						
Item: % of Day with Students Grouped without Regard for Ability						
Magnet	384	2.29	1.00	.051	1.58	.116
Nonmagnet	471	2.18	1.02	.047		
(1=0-5%, 2=6-25%, 3=26-75%, 4=76-100%)						
Item: % of Day Devoted to Peer-Tutoring						
Magnet	383	2.03	.829	.042	.74	.457
Nonmagnet	471	1.99	.830	.038		
(1=0-5%, 2=6-25%, 3=26-75%, 4=76-100%)						

Table 2 Continued

School Type	N	Mean	S_d	S_e	t-value	2-tail Prob.
Item: % of Day Devoted to Written Seatwork for the Whole Class						
Magnet	388	2.02	.888	.045	-3.47	.001
Nonmagnet	492	2.23	.951	.043		
(1=0-5%, 2=6-25%, 3=26-75%, 4=76-100%)						
Item: % of Day Devoted to Individualized Assignments, projects or tutoring						
Magnet	402	2.36	.974	.049	.01	.995
Nonmagnet	501	2.36	.920	.041		
(1=0-5%, 2=6-25%, 3=26-75%, 4=76-100%)						

Table 3: Regression Coefficients of Effects on Teacher's Ratings of Curricular Standardization (N=988)

Variable	Stand. β	Sign. T
School Background:		
% Free/reduced Lunch	.102	.013*
Total Enrollment	-.076	.028*
School Type (1=Magnet, 2=Nonmagnet)	.098	.020*
Workplace:		
Autonomy	-.207	.000**
Bureaucracy	.198	.000**
Principal Interested in Innovation	.063	.086

R^2=.147 F=21.7 Sign. F=.000

* Sign. at the .05 level ** Sign. at the .01 level

For the autonomy, bureaucracy, and principal interested in innovation scales, 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, and 4=Strongly agree.